DERBY DAY *in the* YUKON

by YUKON BILL :

DERBY DAY IN THE YUKON
AND OTHER POEMS
OF THE "NORTHLAND"

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THE MALAMUTE

Derby Day in the Yukon

and other Poems of the "Northland"

by

Yukon Bill

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SO, go you, little broken Song,
And carry to some heart in bitter pain
Only my lute's light laughter; make thou strong
The weak of heart, and bid them smile again!

THESE RHYMES
OF THE NORTHLAND ARE AFFECTIONATELY
INSCRIBED TO MY PARDS, B. AND B.,
WHO HELPED ME TO CARRY MY
PACK OVER LIFE'S TRAIL.

Y. B.

On the Trail, 1910.

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GREETING

* * *

To Robert W. Service

GREETING

SHAKE, Pard! I'm mighty proud o' you!
(I'm know'd as "Yukon Bill");
You blazed th' trail an' blazed it true; ——
Some o' my friends I see y' knew
On old Che-cha-ko Hill;
But say, old man, y' clean forgot my
friend, "Swiftwater Bill!"

YOU was a kid in pettic'uts
When I went in, a man;
Grub-stakin' with two other goats ——
We sow'd th' last of our wild oats
An' th' new, clean life began;
We was th' fu'st (an' p'raps th' wu'st) Five
Fingers' Rapids ran.

GREETING (continued)

I STAKED out Eldorado crick
Long 'fore th' world was told
Them hills from Hunker to St. Mick
Groaned f'r th' drill an' f'r th' pick,
The'r bellies achin' GOLD!
Where many a night th' moon pale white saw
me in blankets rolled.

AT Magnet Gulch I lit my pipe ——
Got drunk upon Gold Hill;
I hoofed it cle'r t' Kokusqum ——
'Twas ther' I lost my Siwash chum
(She drownded in a spill),
An' Love an' Luck together went from pore
old Yukon Bill!

BIG Skookum claim might a-bin mine,
But fortune ther' I missed;
For all I got a-though I sought ——
I starved an' thirsted, dug an' fought,
Was d—— plumbago schist!
Ten years of toil, of muck an' spoil; then on
th' "Failure list."

GREETING (concluded)

LABARGE; th' Canyon; I was there;
I clumb th' Glacier mound.
I might a-bin a millionaire ——
God! think of it, and see me — WHERE?
A bum on Puget Sound! ——
At night my roof th' open sky — my pillow
th' cold ground.

ME for th' trail at seventy!
I'm longin' f'r th' track:
I'll try again — no, I'll not fail ——
I hear them "Little Voices" wail:
"Come back! come back! come back!"
O, God! how Mem'ry knifes me now an'
puts me on th' rack.

YES, yes — I failed! Yes, yes, a drink!
An' then my pipe I'll fill.
Boy, here's t' you — y'r picter's true
Of them old sinners that I knew
On old Che-cha-ko Hill;
But say, old man, y' overlooked my friend,
"Swiftwater Bill!"

DERBY DAY IN THE YUKON

DERBY DAY IN THE YUKON

TALK of England's Derby Race; of Kentucky's blue-grass chase;
Epsom Downs an' Frisco "Tanforan" t' boot;
I don't say they ain't done well, but I tell y' even h —— ll
Couldn't match th' Yukon racin' malamoot.

HOW them dogs they love th' Race! Y' kin see it in th' face
Of th' starvin' scut that hangs aroun' th' claim;
F'r he knows, like you an' me, that th' Derby Day'll be
Th' big jag day — th' glad rag play, that brings th' Yukon fame.

DERBY DAY (continued)

IT was Fool's Day f'r th' Race; every husky
in his place;
Wasky's dogs was runnin' Billy Brown of
Nome;
But at th' Starter's line ranged up Jake Berger's
Nine,
Ten t' one THEY'D bring th' Derby money
home!

THOUSANDS hit th' trail that night; we
was out t' see th' sight;
Th' stakes, eleven-thousand-plunks in gold!
Th' thermometer on strike — every bench-
claim on th' hike ——
An' them leaders b' th' leash y' couldn't
hold.

OH, th' run was cruel hard — th' white frost
how it scarred
As they galloped down th' long, unending
trail;
The whip cut like th' wind, an' Carey's dog,
snow-blind,
Joined his howlin' t' th' screeches of th' gale.

DERBY DAY (continued)

DOWN where Candle's bonfires glow see th' racin' huskies go,
All keen t' win — McCarthy's purp drops dead ——
He's thrown out upon th' track f'r th' lean an' hungry pack
Of grey wolves follerin' th' flyin' sled.

TWO-an'-eighty hours they raced — an' four hunderd-miles they paced,
Them dogs never paused f'r frozen fish 'r drink;
Hung with icicles of foam, the'r lithe bodies stretched whale-bone, —
BUT THEY BROKE THE RECORD MADE BY JIMMIE FINK!

CURSED, an' kicked, an' whipped ahead, th' dumb brutes, staggerin', bled
Where th' whip cut cruel in; but comes th' feast
When at Nome t'morrow night there'll be brawl an' drink, an' fight;
An' no tellin' which is man an' which is beast.

DERBY DAY (concluded)

THEN th' dumb an' winded brute — th' blood-
blinded malamoot,
All frosted foam is gaspin' upon th' bar-room
floor;
He, the WINNER OF TH' RACE! in th' glory
has no place;
He's jes' a slinkin' malamoot when Derby
Day is o'er!

THE MALAMUTE

THE MALAMUTE

HI, there! Into your harness of thong!
(Whip.) You get into your place;
Give him the lash, Bill. Eh ? What's wrong?
See that look in the mal'mute's face: —
Is it devilish cunning o'ermastering pain ?
Some lost soul reincarnate again,
Running Sin's last race.

COME skulkin' into the camp last June,
A leprous, mangy cur;
Reasty and rotten — bayed at th' Moon
As if you'd a grudge 'gainst her.
All fester and soil — corruption and boil;
Your evil face like some carved gargoyle,
And you refused to stir

THE MALAMUTE (continued)

THOUGH I broke th' lash on your back,
YOU subjugated me: —
You proved the master — I proved the hack,
For, plainly I could see
You'd been sent back to earth to work out y'r sin,
And y' came straight t' me, a larrikin;
An' why did you come to me?

WHAT were you There? Unregenerate thief,
A derelict from your birth?
Were you a church-going pharisee,
That Belial of this earth?
Was your lecherous, lutish, animal mind
Drawn to me as one of your kind?
Your grin betrays your mirth.

WELL, me an' you, Mal'mute, stand chums;
We won't each other despise;
The camp may call us a couple o' bums
But we hold our own assize:
We stand for Arbitration straight —
An' mebbe' some day, at St. Peter's Gate
We'll look in each other's eyes.

THE MALAMUTE (concluded)

AH, you leprous devil! you taught me how
To fumigate my soul
From wanton ways and dicing days,
And lush of the flowing bowl:
I'm steeped in guilt right up to the hilt,
Worshipped in temples of Shame I've built,
And Pleasure's been my goal,

BUT here with you in th' hinter-world
Where there's nothing pure but snow,
Some words long dumb t' my lips have come,
A prayer that I used to know: —
" OUR — FATHER! " — I wonder will HE refute
A fellow that learns of a malamute
T' take th' kick an' blow?

OH, down here below we may go th' pace,
Loot, gut, palter, prey, maraud;
But here or There comes settling day,
For y' can't bamboozle God ——
He'll send us back, like you, mal'mute,
Mangy an' whining — black with hell-soot——
Say, Bill, did y' see him nod?

RED-JACKET

RED JACKET, BULLY BOY HE IS

RED-JACKET

WHERE it's eighty below zero, there you'll
find the Northland hero,
Red-Jacket; bully Boy he is — sure
thing he fills the bill!
In that trackless waste of snow, where
the Northern Lights hang low,
He is doing deeds of daring that would
make your pulses thrill: —

AN' WE'LL DRINK T' YOU, RED-JACKET;
THE EQUATOR OF YOUR VEST
BUNCHES ALL THE PRIDE AN' GLORY
OF TH' WILD AN' WOOLLY WEST!

RED-JACKET (continued)

RED-JACKET does no askin', but he's
ready for th' taskin'
When they sling him out his orders, with
a hunk o' pemmican;
An' he'll travel day an' night after Red-
man or bad white,
An' he'll go through hell-an'-blazes, BUT
HE'LL NEVER MISS HIS MAN!

HE LAUGHS AT DEATH AN' DANGER,
FOR TH' CHIN-STRAP ON HIS JAW
IS TH' LINK THAT BINDS CREATION: —
BRITISH FAIR-PLAY, AN' TH'—LAW!

THE spur hitched to his heel—at his hip
th' gleam of steel, —
With his belly-band strapped tighter
his hunger to forget,
He may drop upon th' track BUT YOU BET
HE WON'T TURN BACK —
For it's duty, Duty, DUTY! That's Red-
Jacket's am-u-let!

AN' IT'S "HI! YOU SKULKIN' HUSKY"!
O'ER TH' WINTRY, WIND-SWEPT GROUND,
THE DOG HIS LONE COMPANION —
AND THE SILENCE THAT IS SOUND!

RED-JACKET (concluded)

OH, the Arctic wilds are weary, and the
Arctic nights are dreary;
And Red-Jacket sometimes wonders
why he's livin' th' wild life?
Then he eyes th' British Flag; says:
"GOD BLESS YOU, YOU OLD RAG!
It's through courtin' YOU I've neither
child nor wife"!

THEN A SHAMED AN' SILENT TEAR
FALLS UPON THE ARCTIC SNOWS;
AN' THE ANGUISH OF HIS HEART,
GOD — AN' RED-JACKET, KNOWS!

NOW, you folks, don't get hard thinkin'
when Red-Jacket starts a-drinkin',
An' he busts th' Ten Commandments
into five-an'-twenty bits;
When he hears th' bugles sound, ain't he
fu'st upon th' ground?
An' don't his "powders" cure 'em of
the'r hell-damnation fits?

SO WE'LL DRINK T' YOU, RED-JACKET!
GOD'S BLESSIN' ON Y'R HEAD;
YOU'RE TH' BRITISH CON-STI-TOO-SHUN
BOUND IN YELLA' STRIPES, AN' RED!

UP AGAINST IT

UP AGAINST IT

WHEN y're up against it, don't get feelin' blue;
Somewher' in this world of ours ther's a place f'r you.
Y'r jes' a round peg in a squar', y' ain't th' proper fit;
Keep turnin', twistin' every way — an' rise a little bit.

IF we'd all we wanted in this whirlin' globe we're on,
W'y we'd all begin t' grouch — then begin t' yawn;
We'd get dead sick o' summer without a tech o' frost,
An' Ex-pe-ri-ence we got t' hev' regardless of th' cost.

UP AGAINST IT (concluded)

OH, th' smell o' fightin' powder, that's th' perfume f'r th' nose;
Without th' thorn in hidin' who'd care t' pluck th' Rose?
An' th' tears that wet y'r pillo' at night when y' go t' bed,
They'll wash away y'r troubles — an' y'r sins, tho' ruby red.

BOY, when y'r up against it, get y'r back agin' a fence
An' swing that good ol' we'pon we used t' call "horse sense":
Pitch off y'r coat — go at it jes' like a fightin' man;
Throw up y'r head — glad y' ain't dead — Then sluice y'r bench — an' pan!

SAY, when y'r up against it, don't get feelin' blue;
Ther's room t' spare, ther's plenty air; ain't that enough f'r you?
Every bed-rock wash-up ain't all gold t' th' pan,
But life CAN'T be a "failure" if y' play th' game a MAN!

HOW SLIPPERY PLAYED THE GAME

No, th' story ain't never bin told afore, as I'm th' on'y man seed th' game played on th' dance-hall floor. I was ther' when the fun began. An' what I see I tell you straight — tell it as man to man.

HOW SLIPPERY PLAYED THE GAME

"LOST ag'in!" yelled Slippery Jim,
"Never a mo'sel o' luck in m' life!
Yankee, you're on th' velvet agin!"
Says Yankee: "Jim, let's play f'r a wife!
There's Bonanza Pearl, she's sweet on you; —
Fairer 'card' no gambler ever drew!"

SLIPPERY JIM staked high that night,
The game was poker, — rake -in keeps ——
Yankee Pete hilarious, ready t' fight ——
Rakin' th' gold-dust up in heaps.
Jim's last poke throw'd on th' table, so;
"It's my last ounce, boys! Well, let 'er go!"

SLIPPERY JIM (continued)

HE had staked the dance-hall — staked the bar —
Then, reckless, staked the "Wonder" mine,
Known on Bonanza near an' far
As the lucky strike of Eighty-nine.
Jim had played it all — an' lost! The sweat
Come when he gasps: "It's my last — bet!"

"YOU'VE got Pearl left," grins Yankee Pete,
"Don't funk now, Jim: make her th' stake."
With a howl of hate Jim was on his feet ——
But a voice rings out: "THAT BET WE'LL TAKE!"
And Bonanza Pearl steps up t' me,
"You'll see this game played square!" says she.

SAYS Yank. "I stake my all 'gainst th' Girl."
(Then I see th' flame le'p in his eyes)
"An' if I win you, Bonanza Pearl,
Your soul an' body no man denies
B'longs t' me!" He stacked his gold,
As a groan from Jim his agony told.

SLIPPERY JIM (continued)

NOW, Jim was a MAN. He funked no game; —
Says he: "I'll stake blood, bone an' life,
But I'll put no woman to th' shame
Of bein' played 'a chip' in tin-horn strife!"
But Bonanza, she steps up t' him
An' she says: "Y' COULDN'T LOSE ME, JIM!"

"COME," says Bonanza, "Turn up th' pack";
She skinned the bunch with a laughin' eye;
I gets close up ahind Jim's back
Ready t' let th' bullets fly.
Th' two men playin' a round 'r so,
An' the luck agin' Slippery seem'd t' go.

"STRAIGHT flush o' di'monds — Ace at th' head;"
In a whirlwind play Yank takes the pot.
Slippery's eyes was now blood-red ——
His lips crack'd dry — his breath comin' hot;
The last deal ended the game, I saw
'Twas Yankee Pete's first play — an' draw.

SLIPPERY JIM (continued)

JIM'S hand? cripes! 'Twas a reg'lar prize;
Luck had turned — he had aces t' burn!
But he sot there starin' with bloodshot eyes,
An' what I saw then gev' ME quite a turn ——
F'r th' divil's own luck was at his heel,
He'd an EXTRA CARD — 'twas a clear MISDEAL!

I LET my hand t' th' trigger go ——
Jim's throat gev' a sickish kind o' laugh;
An' he says: "I'm dry as h——ll, so,
W'ot d'ye say to a shandy-gaff?
An'," says Jim, "I'll hev' a bite t' eat;
Pearl, fetch me a sangwich o' bread an' meat"!

I FELT like shootin' that gol-durn Jim,
Losin' th' game with a stake like that;
Wanted t' up an' lambaste him
Chawin' of meat like a hungry cat:
When, all at onct, sort o' swallerin' hard,
I PERCEIVES JIM EATIN' THAT EXTRA CARD!

SLIPPERY JIM (concluded)

"LOCOED!" yelled Yankee, quittin' th' game,
Handin' over th' stakes. But Slippery Jim
Hunchin' up of his powerful frame
Giv' a kind of a grin o' hate at him.
"D——n y'r gold!" he says, "Slippery Jim to-night
Will begin t' live like a man born white!"

NOW, perhaps you'd say the game warn't square ——
An' some might call it a bunko trick;
But if you loved a ga'l an' she stood there,
Wouldn't y' swap souls with old Nick
Rather'n let her go t' Yankee Pete
An' play her game on Bonanza street?

NO, TH' STORY AIN'T NEVER BIN TOLD AFORE. I SAW IT FINISHED — SAW IT BEGAN. SAW IT PLAY'D OUT ON TH' DANCE-HALL FLOOR. IT'S BETWIXT US, MAN T' MAN!

HEROES

HEROES

IF ye run up ag'in Carnegie, I'd kind o' thankful be
If he gets a-talkin' of heroes, you'd ring in Sandy McPhee.

NOW, Mac don't want no medals — he ain't th' braggin' set;
But what he done back in eighty-one, he's livin' t' tell; you bet!

WE was trekin' th' trail t' Forty-Mile; sleepin' in snow-b'ilt caves,
An' the great White Trail we hoofed it on was milestoned jest by graves.

MAC shot on ahead with his dog — itchin' t' make his pile;
Carried his grub-stake on his back. Got there? I should smile!

HEROES (continued)

BUT th' blizzard struck him; th'r he was, him
an' his dog alone ——
A week passed by — then his grub give out;
but he never made no moan.

HIS husky died an' he e't his guts; tho't his
brain 'ud go ——
Then he 'member'd his wife an' kids at home.
Who'd hoe their row?

BOTH feet fruz cle'r int' th' bone! Says he
"Fac's is fac's"; —
Gangrene sot in — black t' th' knees. Then
he ups an' eyes his axe: —

"I AIN'T," says he, "no great M.D., but I
kinder calcalate
To meet this here e-mergency as was sent
b' a unkind Fate."

SO he humped hisself up ag'in a rock in a little
bunch o' trees,
A couple o' hacks with that there axe, an' off
went his laigs at th' knees!

HEROES (concluded)

AND he stumped it int' Forty-Mile! What's that? It ain't true?
It's hard t' b'leeve, I kin onderstand, b' a white-livered skunk like YOU!

BUT, if old Skibo is huntin' a hero, ther's somethin' in my mind
Says that, if he don't see McPhee, HE MUST BE GOL-DURN'D BLIND!

LOWER-FLAT ANNALS

LOWER-FLAT ANNALS

WHEN we lived in Lower-Flat us folks know'd
where we was at;
But them Eastern folks come, puttin' on
great style:
Us Old-Timers, we all said we was better
we was dead,
F'r th' way they talked an' acted, raised our
bile.

THEY interduced new dances — thing-a-me-
bobs called — " Lance's " ——
Where they traipsed up an' down upon th'
floor,
A-bowin' and a'scrapin' (lords an' ladies
they was apin'),
Th' Red River Jig ? 'Twa'n't never danced
no more!

LOWER-FLAT ANNALS (continued)

SNIFFED at bannock — sniffed at bacon;
then, dried apples, they was taken;
An' that good old dish "plum-duff" went out
th' door;
Then "part singin'" in th' church — "A
Choir" up in a perch ——
And a "Tenner" frum th' city. Say, y'
should a-heard HIM roar!

THEN the pretty little crea'cher, boardin'
'round, th' country Teacher;
(Her we fought about f'r dances in th' barn)
SHE went out o' date; a "perfesser" come
t' prate
About ologies an' colleges; things childern
COULDN'T larn.

THEN they started "makin' calls," ketched
Pa in his over-alls;
But he met 'em with a "How'dy!" at th' door;
The place was in a clutter — Ma, she was
churnin' butter,
An' Pa fetch'd 'em in th' kitchen, an' they
didn't "call" no more.

LOWER-FLAT ANNALS (continued)

THAT was Mrs. Mumble-Mumps. Say, she
DID put on humps ;
Took her daughter Gwendolina t' furrin lan's,
An' they say paid out shin-plasters t' one o'
them Old Masters
F'r t' make a bust of Gwendolina's hands!

GONE was th' good old days, and gone th'
good old ways
When an invitation meant th' fambly all;
When th' little an' th' big would crowd into
th' rig,
An' th' fiddle livened up th' Chris'mus Ball.

IT was "Welkim, welkim, Boys!" Lots of
laughin', lots of noise;
With the babies piled like cordwood on th'
floor;
Boys an' girls all dancin' — old folks too got
prancin' ——
An' th' supper? Say, we'd eat ontil we couldn't
hold no more.

LOWER-FLAT ANNALS (continued)

BUT them Eastern folks fetched "Style";
changed all that in a while;
Printed tickets told th' folks they was "to-
home";
Served the supper frum "a buffey," an' they
acted kind o' huffy
When our childern round the parler used t'
roam.

HOUSE was full of bricky-brack; china tea-
pot with a crack, —
An' they sort o' boasted of it; set it out t'
common view;
Talked about the'r "Fambly Tree" — good
land! why, they know'd that we
Had ninety acres of 'em — scrub-oak bluff
— an' poplars too!

THEN Miss Mary Ellen Jones (her that come
from Pile-o'-Bones)
Lived in nothin' but a mud-shack all her life,
She got puttin' on some airs, an' her nose
jes' said, "Who cares?"
And th' District Member picked HER f'r a wife.

LOWER-FLAT ANNALS (continued)

SHE did cut a silly caper: had her envelopes an' paper
Painted with a little brand in blue sot up on top;
When th' Flat laugh'd, I'll be blest! she said, "It's Poppa's crest"!
Well! Providence, that year, hailed out their crop.

BUT Mary Ellen's fall come when they gave th' weddin'-ball;
Invited all th' stylish folks — gave us th' glassy eye;
But says Pa, "Th' next election we'll bust th' damn connection,
F'r th' District Member goes out on th' fly!"

HE he'er'd that. He wanted votes. So them stylish printed notes
Come trailin' in t' us who'd been rejected;
But Mary Ellen said (underlined in ink bright red),
"PLEASE UNDERSTAND NO CHILDREN IS EXPECTED"!

LOWER-FLAT ANNALS (concluded)

THAT joke went far an' wide, us folks laugh'd
ontil we cried;
But Retribution it was on th' District Mem-
ber's shins,
F'r that sassy little bride who behaved so
very snide,
Inside a year perduced a pair of TWINS!

SINCE that time we get on better. Mary
Ellen wrote a letter
T' th' weekly paper, statin' "District Member
liked our ways";
Yes, Lower Flat's grow'd quite a place, runnin'
other towns a race;
But ther' ain't th' fun we had them good old
days!

THE TRAIL

THE TRAIL

IT measures the boundless distance,
Led by wild ways that run
Hither and thither in chase of the Winds
That worship the Northern Sun:
The Trail! which, never ending, was never
yet begun.

IN the dip of the far horizon
Trembles the Morning Star;
To the heights of the fathomless ether
Nor lock, nor bolt, nor bar;
The Trail! God's finger beckoning to the new
Home afar.

THE TRAIL (continued)

NO sound in that void of Silence
Save call of bird to its mate,
Or cry of the lone coyote
At the bars of hunger's gate;
And the heart is drawn by the wond'rous dawn, or some mysterious Fate.

THE Trail hath a storied splendor:
Tepee and Indian Mound;
Where the glory of God is chanted
By no sacrilegious sound;
Where the dumb brute bays HIS praise through Nights profound!

HERE the haunts of men are bounden
By the links of Custom's chain;
There you find embosomed freedom
In the heart's exquisite pain,
And thereafter will be heard the cry, "O, give me the wilds again!"

THE TRAIL (concluded)

THE Trail hath no languorous longing;
It leads to no Lotus land;
On its way dead Hopes come thronging
To take you by the hand;
He who treads the Trail undaunted, thereafter
shall command!

THE KING OF THE KLONDIKE

THE KING OF THE KLONDIKE

WE called him the King of the Klondike; but
He really was " Mac."
He walked int' Dawson in tatters an' rags,
His frozen feet tied in a pair of ol' bags,
An' perceeded t' go on a couple of jags;
Pack on his back.

HE worked empty-bellied f'r many a day,
Pore old Mac!
Stuck tight t' his diggin as if it was play;
With a good game of poker 'till daylight he'd
stay ——
An' a gun he could han'le. I also might say
He would crack

THE KING OF THE KLONDIKE (continued)

A FINE joke. But he never was known
Wasn't Mac.
T' refuse man 'r dog a crust 'r a bone.
He kep' t' hisself; perferred livin' alone ——
An' ther' was a sort o' respectable tone
'Bout his shack.

HE said of them " girls " that defied Law an' ban,
(Humpin' his back):
" Pore kids! fetched low b' some skunk of a man ——
Boys, give 'em a hand-up wheniver y' can;"
(On the'r 'count Soapy Smith out of Dawson he ran
With Black Jack!)

HE lived like a prince and he spent like a king,
Did old Mac.
Whatever he said 'r he did had th' ring
Of pure gold; but one day in th' spring
Struck a vein in th' rock that made us all sing,
" 'Rah f'r Mac! "

THE KING OF THE KLONDIKE (continued)

BUT th' fortin' he made was th' fortin' he spent
In a crack.
Paid all he owed t' th' very las' cent ——
Then, off on a h—— of a spree we all went ——
An' th' gold? why, he wasted it, gev' it an' lent
B' th' sack.

NEX' mornin' he woke up as pore as a mouse,
Boozer Mac.
Another chap, who had th' heart of a louse,
Would a-blow'd off his head 'r burnt down th' house,
'R int' th' river a-taken a souse,
Things goin' slack.

BUT he stuck t' th' diggin' like hound t' th' trail,
Worn ol' Mac.
Jes' like an ol' farmer a-swingin' his flail,
Jes' like ol' Abe Linco'n a-splittin' his rail;
D'ye think a MAN like him c'd ever spell f-a-i-l,
'R fall back?

THE KING OF THE KLONDIKE (continued)

NO, Sir! He worked till he struck a new vein,
Brave ol' Mac!
This time he held tight th' "millionaire" rein;
Swore as he'd never be foolish again;
Then he got drunk. I tell it with pain, —
Scooted back

EAST. An' I read in them Papers one day,
Klondike Mac
Had gone t' them "diggin's" anunder th' clay;
An' he was a pauper ag'in! Talk of Play ——
"Life's jes' a stage!" as Spokshare mought say;
That's a fac'!

MOST of 'em Kings as I've heer'd on went bust,
Jes' like Mac.
None of 'em carries the'r crowns int' dust; —
They sport 'roun' a while, but die they all must; —
An' I don't know as one of th' king-bunch I'd trust,
Lookin' back,

THE KING OF THE KLONDIKE (concluded)

LIKE th' King of th' Klon! Him we knew
As ol' Mac.
Rulers like him y'll find ther's d——n few;
Ther's lots of 'em sportin' a Crown ain't true
blue.
But Mac? he was royal — a King through
an' through,
An' no "Jack"!

UP No'th they'll 'member him an' things he
done
Way back.
We won't give his Crown t' no Son-of-
a-gun;
Ther's no entail on Kings t'other side of th'
sun,
An' pre-ce-dence ther' will go, ten t' one,
T' King Mac!

GHOSTS

GHOSTS

DEEP lies the snow on the white, white plain,
And frosted the fretwork on window-pane.

THE Storm King has laid his icy clasp
On th' lock o' th' Year: 'tis an iron hasp.

THE camp fire gleams, and its ruddy glow
Throws shadows quaint on the drifting snow;

MY heart leaps up, for I see a form
That makes the blood in my veins run warm:

GHOSTS (continued)

A WOMAN is standing beside my bed,
And these are the words, I swear, she said: —

"YOU MAY WANDER AFAR; BUT, GO WHERE YOU WILL,
THE GHOSTS OF THE PAST WILL FOLLOW YOU STILL!"

ANOTHER comes — a girl-face, worn,
And of every good resolution shorn, —

SHE utters no word; but her eyes of blue
Are burning, piercing me through and through!

YET another comes and takes Her place ——
I close my eyes lest I see HER face ——

FOR the flush of youth on the girlish brow
Is lost in the wanton woman now —

GHOSTS (concluded)

AND I was to blame! God, let me forget!
And I wipe away the beads of sweat

THAT lie on my brow like blood-red rain ——
And I try to pray — but words are vain; —

FOR I know that the ghosts of my sins are here
To mock me at this, the end o' th' Year!

AN ANGEL

AN ANGEL

TH' angils ain't all up in Heaven.
Not by a long shot. Say,
Ther's angils a-livin' an' breathin'
Right here in th' camp to-day.
An' th' crown of one, I kin tell ye
Is on'y a tangle of hair,
But the halo that lingers around it
Is brighter than any up There.
One of her laigs goes a-limpin',
Her langwige ain't grammar of books,
An' she ain't airned th' title "A Angil"
Along of her beauty of looks;
'Nless y' saw her as I did ——
'Nless y' saw her, like me,
Le'p int' hell-flame f'r t' rescue
Th' baby of drunken Magee.

AN ANGEL (continued)

MAGEE in th' cellar was hootchin';
Th' gal was a-sloppin' at chores,
Washin' bottles an' kegs f'r th' bar-man,
Slingin' cocktails ahind th' baize-doors.
Of a suddent a wild cry of " F-i-r-e," come
With a lick o' th' flame, left an' right;
The boozers they scooted f'r safety
An' th' baby was left in th' fright.
One wild cry above th' fierce cracklin' ——
A yell of despair in the din:
" My BABY ! O, GOD, SEND AN ANGEL! "
He did. And the Angel went in
While us men stood a-shakin' an' shame-faced;
The manhood in us not quite dead ——
We was drunk — dazed with horror an' whisky
'R we'd foller'd th' gal where she led
Into that hell-gate of red flame ——
Int' th' whirl of th' fire;
And we all held our bre'th, knowin' well it was death
Come a-nigher an' nigher.

AN ANGEL (continued)

BUT no! What we all saw a-comin'
Was th' Angil of Life: — at her breast
That damn kid of Magee's snug an' snorin',
As if in th' cradle at rest.
But th' gal? Her face out of resemblance
T' anythin' human, you'd say,
She come staggerin', gaspin' an' blinded ——
(Us men turned our faces away);
Then, "Lame Mary!" we busted a-shoutin',
Goin' mad f'r a minit with joy;
Magee, he was dancin' a hornpipe
An' his Missis was huggin' th' Boy.
But the gal as I christen'd "A Angil"
We was shoutin' her name somethin' wild ——
Swings 'roun' on her game foot,
Says: "Shet up, y' galoot,
An' don't be f'r wakin' th' child!"

YOU bet she was game, was th' Angil: ——
Tho' she wasn't f'r playin' no harps,
Sittin' on a damp cloud a-slingin' th' crowd,
A-thumpin' th' flats an' th' sharps;

AN ANGEL (concluded)

SHE WAS STRAIGHT ON HER JOB, was th' angil;
Wantin' nothin' down here but her share;
An' my biler 'ud bust if I thought any "Trust"
Side-tracked my Angil up — There!

BILLY BIRD'S CELEBRATION

BILLY BIRD'S CELEBRATION

BILLY BIRD was know'd as a bar-room bum;
Be'n a trader out on th' plains;
Be'n a timber rafter, a fourth-ward grafter,
Hadn't no conshunce, hadn't no brains;
But was well perserv'd in Rum.

HE hailed frum Mi-sou-ri 'r Michi-gan;
Was cook in a lumber camp;
Run a Wild West show, then turn'd hobo,
Was an all-roun' fu'st class tramp; —
'N y' couldn't call him a " man."

HE'D b'en kicked an' cussed like a mongrel pup,
An' a cock-fight was his creed;
An' eye out o' joint was another bad point,
But with th' one left he see'd
Far enough t' hit th' cup!

BILLY BIRD (continued)

HE'D th' wanderin' itch in his lazy heels
(With th' luck that comes t' sich);
F'r one day, dead drunk, that mis'ble skunk
Struck a vein that made him rich.
Y' sh'd hear Billy Bird's squeals: —

"I'M richer'n Creesus!" (this he howled);
"I've th' biggest strike aroun';
I'm a reg'lar gent!" (Here his bre'th was spent
An' he tumbles upon th' groun');
B' his luck Billy Bird got fouled.

CLUMB up on a kag t' make a speech.
Says he: "I'm th' Turrible Turk!
I'm a millionaire, an' I'll curl th' hair
Of th' man says I need work!
Me? I'm a rainbow out of reach!

"I'M off t' Noo York t' get int' th' swirl;
Tip them waiters ten-dollar bills;
I'm a millionaire! Don't I wear th' air
That goes with th' pace that kills?
An' I'm goin' t' pick my Girl!

BILLY BIRD (continued)

"I'LL buy her di'mon's t' blaze her front,
An' th' best champagne we'll spill;
An' I'll murder th' man as says what he can
See I ain't no gent! Me, Bill!
An' I tell y' that's MY stunt!

"I'LL buy a floor in th' big ho-tel;
I'll dazzle th' chamber-maids;
Fifth Avenoo style in my auto-mo-bile
I'll speed her up with my jades;
I'll show 'em a Yukon swell!

"I'LL dine on snakes fried in burnin' oil,
An' dance till th' cows come home;
As an aftermath take a champagne bath
An' shampoo with a curry-comb;
All done up accordin' t' Hoyle.

"THEN I'll hike t' bed with a great, big, head, —
Yellin': 'CALL WHEN THE CLOCK HITS FOUR!'
An' I'll wait with a grin till th' 'call' comes in,
An' Brass Buttons knocks at th' door,
An' he thinks I'm sleepin' dead!

BILLY BIRD (concluded)

"BRASS BUTTONS 'tap, tap, tap' on th' door: —
'Millionaire, it is four A. M.!'
An' I'll bust that door with a Yukon roar:
Howlin: 'Say! d'ye know WHO I AM?'
An' I'll rouse 'em on every floor!

"W'EN th' house comes runnin' up I'll yell: —
'WOW! I'm a millionaire!
I DON'T HEV' T' GET UP, y' blankety Pup!'
An' the'r eyes stickin' out 'll stare,
While I send 'em plumb t' h——ll!"

* * * *

P. S. — BILLY BIRD, MILLIONAIRE, REACHED WINNIPEG,
WHERE PEROXIDE BLONDES PULLED BILLY BIRD'S LEG.
YOU'LL FIND HIM TO-DAY IN A YUKON S'LOON
SLUSHIN' BEER TO TH' SAME OLD PLAYED-OUT TUNE: —
"O! THEM GURLS THEY PULLED MY LAIG!"

INVITATION

INVITATION

I BRING you a prairie greeting
Crested with sunlight sheen,
A picture of mountains rising
To snow-capped heights of green;
A call from the happy home-land
Where human hearts beat warm,
Where western corn-fields beckon
And shelter from life's storm.

LONDON, thy heart of riches
Hath the pulse-beat of unrest,
Where the many know no shelter,
Where the babe weeps at the breast
All bared to the winter shiver,
Where the hearth-fire, cold and dead,
Is darkened by the shadow
And Shapes of the underfed.

WHEN I MET WITH JIM ALONG THE DAWSON TRAIL

JIM

'TWAS th' days of th' stampede — I was of
th' hobo breed ——
When I met with Jim along th' Dawson
trail;
F'r Bonanza I was strikin'; an' Jim? well,
he was hikin'
Along th road t' Anywhere — Jerusalam
or jail.

SEEMED t' me how all th' people had got
soured in his steeple,
But for wimmin most of all he'd bitter
thoughts;
But we got on quite congenial, him a gen'le-
man — me menial,
And I got t' kind of likin' Jim ——in spots!

JIM (continued)

BUT he wouldn't stick t' minin'. He was always drunk an' whinin';
An' th' boys was glad the day he quit th' camp;
Next I see him with th' crowd down at Dawson, an' I 'lowed
I never see a bigger, low-down scamp.

WAS he single? Was he marri'd? I dunno', but sure he carried
A little bit of locket on his breast,
And onct I see him open it — but that was in a dopin' fit ——
An' I laugh'd t' see Jim's mouth ag'in it pressed!

BUT a fella' will act loony when he's full an' feelin' spoony,
Howsumever, Jim an' me went differ'nt ways;
Me an' th' boys with pans a-washin' cricks on old Bonanza,
An' when I met with Jim ag'in 'twas after many days.

JIM (continued)

BAD hootch an' rotten food fetched th' scurvy quick an' good,
An' tho' I'd made my millions it didn't help me out;
I was side-tracked by th' fever, in th' hands of God's Receiver,
An' th' sexton he most had me b' th' snout!

BUT them dandy little Sisters, them as cooked us with the'r blisters,
Made us swaller swill we hated "'cos th' Doctor said 'twas good";
One I liked called "Sister Mary" — she was tiny as a Fairy —
'Twas a sin to hide her beauty anunder a black hood.

HER face, tho' never smilin', had a look that was beguilin';
Her blue eyes they would wander far away,
Jes' as if her heart was crawlin' to some Voice as was a-callin':
"MARY, LITTLE MARY!" night an' day.

JIM (continued)

THIS was my fool-brain a-ravin'; I couldn't be behavin'
For th' fever to my guts was eatin' in;
But her hand upon th' pillo' was like foam upon th' billo',
When she spoke t' us of One who pardon'd sin.

LORD, how th' fever got 'em! Lord, how th' Doctors fought 'em!
How them Sisters stood th' racket night an' day:
Talk of Angils? Up in heaven don't believe as you'd find Seven
Could beat them a-makin' plasters, or beat 'em on the Pray!

WELL, one mornin' when I waken I see th' next bed taken
By a feller, as was ravin' like a loon;
Sich a face! All hair an' blotches (th' kind th' fever scotches) ——
An' I says, says I: "His Nibs'll ketch you soon!"

JIM (continued)

IF they'd fine-tooth-combed creation f'r my personal elation
To rake in a friend an' leave him lyin' there,
Why, they couldn't a-done better with a Dawson lawyer's letter,
F'r 'twas JIM beneath th' blotches an' th' hair!

HE was ravin', he was mutterin'; he was swearin', he was stutterin';
Sister Mary trippin' round him like a little drift o' snow,
An' she hovered as a dove might with flutterin' wings of white light,
So softly that you'd wonder did she come or did she go?

ONE night, I wasn't sleepin' — Sister Mary night watch keepin',
Jim, weak as a babby, lyin' there upon th' bed,
Says: "Sister, — you remind me — of a — Girl — I left behind me" ——
She gev' a little shiver, sayin': "HSH! THAT — GIRL IS — DEAD!"

JIM (continued)

THEN I he'erd old Jim a-gaspin' — her han's his han's was claspin',
Callin' "MARY, Oh, God, MARY!" eyes a-bulgin' in his head;
She was lookin' down at him, but she on'y whisper'd "J—im!"
But her face was like the face of some one dead.

THE'R han's was locked a minute — ther' wasn't no wrong in it ——
They spoke no words, but eyes looked into eyes ——
Then, without a word of talkin' she went, like one sleep-walkin',
An' I he'erd Jim groanin' tur'ble 'twixt his sighs.

BUT nex' mornin' little Sister hikes along with a big blister,
Jest as dinky an' as smilin' as before;
But Jim? he lay there blinkin', I guess HE was a-thinkin'
How them little fingers trimbled takin' down his fever score.

JIM (concluded)

DOC. said old Jim was dyin'. That night I
he'erd him sighin',
An' he up an' says: "Say, Pard, when
I'm — at rest ——
Will you see this — little locket — goes with
me — in the pocket
Of the heart that's lyin' broken — in my
breast?"

AND if you're no doubtin' Thomas you'll
believe I kep' that promise;
And the Face inside the locket, HUMAN
EYE SHALL NEVER SEE;
P'raps it was, or wasn't Sister, her we called
"Saint Mustard Blister,"
When she pumped th' pills an' quinine int'
pore old Jim an' me!

TALE OF THE CHE-CHA-KO

TALE OF THE CHE-CHA-KO

CHE-CHA-KO arrived from London Town
Wearing a sort of superior frown ;
Registered, " Bellingham-Bolingbroke-
Browyne "
(Hyphenating himself in the middle).
He carried of " boxes " just twenty-four,
Voted the country " A beastly boah ";
Laughed at the " shops," which he roundly
swore
" Weren't worth a Ta-ra-diddle! "

HE purchased of farm lands some sections six,
Said: " With those common fawmahs I
shan't mix! "
Then he started in with his La-de-dah tricks
And built him a " Countwy Seat."
Now, a " country seat " in this western land
Is top rail of a fence, or a pile of sand,
But Che-cha-ko's daily, diurnal demand
Was, " The best people I must meet."

TALE OF THE CHE-CHA-KO (continued)

THEY met him half way, for they cleaned him out,
Drank his "extra dry" every ball and rout;
His poor working-man neighbour he called "a lout,"
And laughed at the "countwy daunce."
His amazement was great to learn we "digged wells";
Said, "We don't do it around Bow Bells";
And, describing the life of the London swells,
Sighed: "Pore devils! you haven't a chaunce!"

HE played "Gentleman Fawmah" a year or two,
His cash was all spent (his friends went too)
And then he wanted to "borrow a few Pounds" from his own hired man.
But the rough fellow said, "My London Cock,
When you learn to work, quit your bally talk,
You'll float your Ship-of-State off th' rock!"
(And he winked, did the hired man.)

TALE OF THE CHE-CHA-KO (continued)

HE considered the matter, did B. B. Browyne,
Quit every reference to "Deah London Town,"
And his neighbour, "the Lout," why, he came right down
And did what we all expected:
Lent B. B. seed-grain for his season's crop;—
Said: "Hang on, m' Boy, y'll come out on top."
He did. The Che-cha-ko never cried "stop"
Till for parliament he was elected!

SO down at Ottawa now he sits
Where he spits and smokes, and smokes and spits;
In government circles he splendidly fits,
And he's known as "Bully Boy Brown"!
For he was a man that took his chance ——
He got right down to his Song-and-Dance ——
Let out "London Pride" with his workman's lance,
Tried the smile instead of the frown.

TALE OF THE CHE-CHA-KO (concluded)

FOR the "Browyne" who would win out in the west
Is the Brown with common sense that's blest;
Leaves "Grandpa" at home with the Family crest,
Puts hand to the plow; and then ——
Follows the furrow as straight as a die,
Stout heart, steady hand, with a watchful eye;
He'll come to his own, and I'll tell you why: ——
The west is calling for MEN!

ST. BONIFACE FIRE BRIGADE

ST. BONIFACE FIRE BRIGADE

W'EN you come wes' from de oder place
An' you want sometings for see;
Jus' come an' see St. Boniface
An' I show you sometings, me: —
Dar's de Mission Church dat W'ittier sing ——
"Turrets twain," wher' de peoples prayed;
But dar's sometings we got better still ——
Da's St. Boniface Fire Brigade!

DA'S a g-rea-t Brigade; — has mans tree, four ——
Married mans wit be-eg fam-i-lee;
Champeau, Dorien, petite Lafleur,
An' Jean Perriault (da's ME).
Us mans we work like h——ll all day
Wit de saw, de hammer an' de spade,
But by gar, w'en de fire-bell she goes "ring,"
Da's de t'am we don't was 'fraid.

ST. BONIFACE FIRE BRIGADE (continued)

YOU hear dat ting 'bout d' beeg oil-house;
Tree hundre' bar'ls cotch de fire?
De smoke, mon Dieu! wit de flame go hup
To de top of de be-eg church-spire; —
Lafleur's femme, she take de fit hon de floor ——
Ma femme, she scre-ee-ch, "Saint Marie!"
Hevery one yell — dat place look like he—ll,
Ontil Dorien, Champeau, an' ME ——

WE fill hup de tank in de Red Rivaire ——
Sacre! how de mans per—s—pire;
De peoples go cra—ss—y; Winnipeg despaire;
An' de bells dey ring, "F-i-r-e! — F-i-r-e."
W'at you t'ink happens? You nevaire don't guess ——
Notings like dat happens sence; —
De horse runs away — de hose it go burs' ——
But we save de dog-poun' fence!

ST. BONIFACE FIRE BRIGADE (concluded)

YOU hear w'at 'appens once in de place?
W'en d' King's son he come Wes',
All d' womans dress hup, wash d' baby face;
An' d' mans put hon he's bes'.
Winni-peg bow down t' George d' Prince; —
Put d' soldier-mans hon parade;
But de Prince, he sick of d' whole dam' show,
Hask: "WHER' ST. BONIFACE FIRE BRIGADE?"

Y—AS, an' w'en d' heartquake shake Frisco,
"Hend of d' worl'!" some sa-aid;
I send telegraff (cos' me tree dollaire),
"You like have my Fire Brigade?"
Hon d' las' Election, in d' Town-Hall
Laurier sp'ik; He sa—aid: —
Gentilhomme! if — you — want — put — dat
— bad — Tory — hout,
Get St. Boniface Fire BRIGADE!"

"WINDY"

"WINDY"

LADY Marmaduke Montague-Marlinford-Dunne
Came out to the Yukon in search of her son;
Heir to vast estates and to lands long entailed,
Handed down by great grandpapa's fist (which was mailed).
The young man had mushed in by the lone Chilcoot Pass
And was known to the boys as "That titled young Ass."

"WINDY" (continued)

FOR the stuff he wrote home took Belgravian breath:
"Dear Monty with savages!" — "mushing!" — "to death"!
They were shocked at the mention "pay-dirt"; and "the pan,"
They fully explained, was "held by Monty's man!"
At St. James, The Carlton, The Ritz, it was told
How "Monty owns mountains and canyons of — Gold!"

CAME a lapse in the years and the letters. Despair
Seized the hearts in Belgravia — no word from the heir;
For the lure of the Northland — the life of the camp,
Had Monty the Beau transformed into a — tramp
Who had drifted, like jetsam, the breakers among,
And had almost forgotten his own mother-tongue.

* * * * *

PRAY, SIR, HAVE YOU SEEN MR. MARMADUKE

"WINDY" (continued)

IN the year ninety-eight arrived per Dawson stage
In December, a lady, a maid, and a page;
One clearly of rank. With the air of a queen
She stepped up to the desk, asking: "Pray, have you seen
Mr. Marmaduke Montague-Marlinford-Dunne?"
Adding proudly, — "The gentleman, Sir, is my son."

THE clerk at the desk stared and stammered, then said: —
"No gent be that name in this shack has his bed;
But mebbe' th' Boys" — Here he calls to a bunch,
"Say, has any o' youse seed a kid with a hunch
That sounds like — Ma'am, wot was th' name o' y'r son?"
She faltered, "Sir! Montague-Marlinford-Dunne!"

"WINDY" (continued)

NOBODY knew him — worse, nobody cared —
But the bar-keep speaks up (while his quid he prepared),
"Say, w'ot was th' kid like?" — one stared at the other ——
"Warn't he a pardner of Billy Bird's brother?
An' had he a bench-claim know'd as 'Bloody Jim'?
'Cos if he had ther's a warn't out f'r HIM!"

"I'LL describe him, good sirs," said the lady in tears:
"He left home just of age, namely twenty-one-years.
His hair, sunny gold, is inclined to up-curl ——
His complexion is peach-like — he's fair as a girl.
He has large, soulful eyes, they are beaming and kind, —
A soft, bird-like voice — and an artistic mind.

"WINDY" (continued)

"MILITARY in bearing — broad-shouldered and tall;
Speaks languages seven — a 'linguist,' you'd call.
Paints, sings, rides to hounds; he dresses with care;
A de-lightful manner, with most restful air: —
Oh! prithee, good gentlemen, find me my son,
Whom all London once knew as 'THE DASHING BEAU-DUNNE!'"

THE lady was weeping in 'kerchief of lace
And she saw not the smile on the rough miner's face, —
Who said: "Ma'am, y' won't find y'r angel up here, —
Them pertickler brands — with 'wings' — disappear!
But here's 'Windy' comin' — he knows, th' ol' tramp,
Every Jack on th' trail, every Jill in th' camp!"

"WINDY" (concluded)

"BING-BANG!" The door opens and
"Windy" appears,
A be-whiskered, a pimple-pocked tough to
his ears:
His jeans all in tatters, his muck-a-lucks
worn;
His parka was dirty, and mud-splashed
and torn.
His greeting: "WOW! HAND OUT A
HOOTCH! DURN MY GIZZARD
IF I WARN'T COTCHED IN A HUNKER CRICK
BLIZZARD!"

THE lady turns pale. Then the bar-keep
behind
Hollers: "Windy, ol' cock! can YOU call t'
y'r mind
A chump 'round this camp —— Ma'am, wot
was th' same
Double-decker y' called b' th' telescope
name?" ——
But the lady, eyes staring, was shrieking,
"MY SON!"
Lo! "Windy" be-whiskered was "DASH-
ING BEAU-DUNNE!"

MY SONG

MY SONG

I COULD not sing unless my song
Had in its symphony one broken string;
I could not say the thoughts that in me rise
Unless my heart had been a broken thing.
Why is it that the voice of Song so yields
Mute music till the heart hath bled?
Why should we find most fair and far-off fields
By thorny by-paths led?

BUT if this little weakling song of mine
Might carry cheer to one, lone, grieving soul,
Most gladly would I offer Hope's bright wine
And, smiling, drink the lees left in the bowl:

MY SONG (concluded)

For I have in the darkness found some light, —
Some sunshine seen in shadowed evening hours,
And I have found throughout the lonely night
Some perfumed breathings from wild garden bowers.

AND I were ingrate not to send it on,
Such echo of what music in me lies,
For it may bring to some o'er darkened dawn
The brightening glow that comes with morning skies.
So, go you, little broken Song,
And carry to some heart in bitter pain
Only my lute's light laughter. Make thou strong
The weak of heart and bid them smile again.